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## **QUARTERLY REPORT**

**Regional Agricultural Development Program – West (RADP-W)**

**Agreement No. AID-306-C-14-00007**

**FY2015 Quarter 2 – January to March 2015**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AAEP	Afghan Agriculture Extension Project
ABADE	Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprises
ACCI	Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industry
ADF	Afghanistan Development Fund
AIB	Afghan International Bank
AISA	Afghanistan Investment Support Agency
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
AHG	Afghan Holding Group
AMF	Afghan Microfinance
ANHDO	Afghan National Horticultural Development Organization
APPF	Afghan Public Police Force
APS	Annual Program Statement
ATAR	Afghan Trade and Revenue Project
AREA	Agency for Rehabilitation and Energy Conservation in Afghanistan
CCTV	Closed Circuit TV
CDC	Community Development Council
CHA	Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
CIMMYT	(Spanish) International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center
DAIL	Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
DCA	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan
DDA	District Development Assemblies
DOWA	Department of Women's Affairs
FAIDA	Financial Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan
FINCA	Foundation for International Community Assistance
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Points Control
HVC	High Value Crops
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Area

IDEA-NEW	Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East and West
ISO	International Standards Organization
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MFI	Morvarid Food Industries
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NICCOD	Nippon International Cooperation for Community Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMD	New Market Development
OFWMP	On-Farm Water Management Project
PICS	Purdue Improved Crop Storage
RADP-W	Regional Agriculture Development Project, West
RIA	Request for Application
RSDO	Razi Sanaye Development Organization
SC	Save the Children
SIL	Services International LL
SMLE	Small, Medium, Large Enterprise
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit
VOC	Vineyard Owner Cooperatives
WDOA	Welfare and Development Organization for Afghanistan
WV	World Vision

## 1. Project Overview

- Project Start Date: August 10, 2014
- End Date: August 9, 2019
- Prime Implementing Partner: Chemonics International
- Key Subcontractors: Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA), Agency for Rehabilitation and Energy Conservation in Afghanistan (AREA), Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA), Equal Access, Services International LL (SIL), Afghan Public Police Force (APPF), Afghan Holding Group (AHG)
- Geographic Coverage: Herat, Badghis, and Farah

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** RADP-W promotes investments leading to sustained increases in farmer incomes and private sector growth. This is done with training and mentoring of farmers and agribusinesses in the use of appropriate technologies and business practices and strengthening linkages along the value chain to improve profitability for businesses, and a better supply of inputs and services to farmers along with better prices and larger volumes in the product market. There are four principal components:

**Wheat** – Improve productivity, reduce farmers’ losses, and strengthen value chain linkages to connect farmers to markets, improve food security, and boost household incomes.

**High Value Crops** – Invest strategically in high value crops such as grapes, selected orchard crops, and vegetables to strengthen market competitiveness and develop sustainable commercial exports of quality products.

**Livestock** – Support farmers in maximizing the opportunities for improved production, nutrition, and environmental impacts.

**Enabling Environment** – Promote dialogue between Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and local producers, processors and traders to identify obstacles and opportunities for improving the quantity and quality of Afghan goods, increasing market access, and strengthening relevant policies to better support farmers and agribusiness.

## 2. Executive Summary

### 2.1 Summary of results for the reporting period and key achievements

The Herat team was operating during the entire quarter, but both the AREA team in Badghis and the CHA team in Farah were under contract and began start-up in March. As a result, the Herat team is far ahead of the other two in the development of relationships, contacts, and ideas that will contribute to activities in Year 1. Despite working out of temporary offices in both Kabul and Herat, and despite the lack of an MOU with MAIL, RADP-W was able to launch the first field activity, horticultural demonstration and training for 220 women in Enjil, Herat. This activity started with meetings with DAIL in January and connecting to women farmers through the contact in DAIL. In relatively short time, and working together with DAIL, RADP-W identified a dynamic woman leader and organized an innovative activity that was providing field training and planting a 1 jerib demonstration plot in March. In the same way, the RADP-W team in Herat is at the stage of developing the same type of relations and contacts that will lead to more innovative activities in 2015.

During the second quarter, RADP-W brought on board 10 technical staff in Herat out of a total at that time of 17. The wheat team and the Herat Provincial Director were brought on board during the last week of February and the first week of March. This staffing pattern

created the critical mass for being able to design detailed technical strategies and work plans for CLINs 1, 2, and 3. These were reviewed in a series of working meetings in Kabul, and formed the basis for documents that can be shared with the Herat DAIL Director and action plans that can be translated into implementation schedules and detailed procurement, contracting, and logistic plans.

By the end of March, work on security upgrades and make ready of living and office space was complete at the Sikander compound, but moving in was delayed by complications in starting the training of the APPF static guards.

AREA and CHA contracts were signed in early March, and both were able to start staffing and preparation of offices in Badghis and Farah. With their core staff on board, both were able to develop CLIN specific strategies that conform to the RADP-W Work Plan and are in line with project objectives, targets, indicators and impact goals, but with specific activities that respond to the conditions in each province. DCA was also brought on board and was able to immediately start developing their offices in Herat and Badghis, and they began to identify existing VFU's that will be eligible for continued support, at the same time developing village profiles to identify locations for 16 new VFUs in RADP-W districts.

A meeting in USAID with the DAIL Director from Herat resulted in DAIL support for RADP-W to start working informally at the provincial, district, and village levels, however, the depth of the work was limited by resistance at the DDA level to working without a formal signed MOU. The same scenario also played out in both Badghis and Farah – the teams were able to develop very good personal and working relations with the DAIL Directors and work and consult with them informally, but they met bureaucratic resistance to permitting work in the districts without an MOU.

## **2.2 Constraints and critical issues**

By the end of March, several critical issues involving security began to threaten the timeliness and coverage of implementation. Security concerns began to increase for several districts in all three provinces, especially along the roads. These include Shindand and Pashtun Zarghun in Herat, Pusht Rod in Farah, and Muqur in Badghis. Travel to these areas was still possible, but contingency plans were developed to increase the number of local field staff and reduce the need for travel in these areas.

Also toward the end of March, both Chemonics and DynCorp/SIL were experiencing delays in issuance of AISA business licenses and a license to carry weapons for SIL. This delayed DynCorp signing a contract with the APPF, selecting candidates for static guards, and providing training. These delays reduced movement in Kabul and threatened to push back the schedule for moving the RADP-W team into the Sikander. The issue was brought to the US Embassy and communications were established with the GIRoA to try to resolve the issues.

Although the majority of the local staff were hired and began work, the Chemonics staff were not able to move into the new offices in Herat due to lack of security and other administrative issues with regard to compound renovation and making the compound safe for occupancy. This made supervision and direction of field staff extremely difficult and required frequent visits to Kabul on behalf of local staff for guidance.

Another constraint that began to hinder the ability to work with authorities at the district and village level was a delay in signing the MOU with MAIL. Some initial meetings and planning sessions were held, but field operations were not begun.

### 3. Activity Implementation

#### 3.1 Indicator/Activity Performance

There have been 221 women beneficiaries with initial training, but they won't be counted and officially considered achievements against indicator targets until they are validated by the M&E team. They are included here conditioned on the validation.

Indicator name and number	DO & IR that the project supports	Baseline Value	Current FY Target	Current FY Result	% of variance between target and result	Next FY Target	Two FY Out Target	Reason for +/- 10% variance
#3, #10	DO 1 IR 1.2	NA	NA	211	NA	NA	NA	NA
#9, #17	DO 1 IR 1.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

#3 Number of households benefited by agriculture and alternative development interventions

#9 Percent of target households engaged in nutrition-sensitive agriculture activities

#10 Number of Farmers growing high value crops as a result of USG assistance

#17 Proportion of female participation in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources

NOTE: percentages and proportions are undefined in the absence of aggregate targets and achievements for indicators # 9 and # 17

#### 3.2 Key Activities Accomplished during the Quarter

##### • Activity 1 – Gender/HVC Women's Horticultural Project - Herat

The RADP-W gender team held coordination meetings with the DAIL Home Economics Department Manager, with whom they identified Ms. Halima, a dynamic leader in the village of Ghazun Sanger in the Enjil District. Together they identified the lack of standard best practices for vegetables as the principal constraint for local vegetable producers, and in February they structured a training and demonstration activity for 220 women. Ms. Halima offered a jerib of her own land to use for demonstration and training for 20 women, who would serve as lead farmers and share responsibility for production on that jerib, and the 20 women signed an agreement to train and mentor an additional 10 women each. RADP-W provided training, tools, and improved seed (including eggplant, tomato, pepper, okra, cucumber, and squash). Seedbeds were prepared and seedlings were planted in March and training was started for a mid-April planting.

Each of the 20 women received improved seed for an additional 200 square meters at their own farm, and the same was provided to the 200 neighboring women farmers who are receiving mentoring from the lead farmers. Depending on the adoption rate, the total area of open field trellised, raised bed vegetables will be as much as 23 jeribs.

As the year progresses, the women will receive training in new technologies and improved practices including soil preparation, raised beds, irrigation, seedbeds for

seedlings, vegetable seed production, integrated pest management, preparation of animal manure, trellising, and plastic mulch. All training and demonstrations will be entirely consistent with environmentally friendly good agricultural practices, and no chemical pesticides or herbicides will be used. The women will be eligible to participate in the development of greenhouses and/or a packing center, and throughout the training program they will be introduced to input and seed suppliers and farm stores, and they will see demonstrations of farm machinery, processing equipment, and packaging.

- **Activity 2 - Irrigated Agriculture Review and Analysis**

Prepared review and analysis of irrigation agriculture opportunities and potential for RADP-W implementation program, at the request of the USAID Mission. Analysis of precision laser land leveling in on-going projects in Afghanistan and adjacent countries led to conclusion that pilot demonstrations would potentially lead to improved wheat production (by more evenly spreading irrigation water over the entire field) and would be even more beneficial for those areas where wheat is withdrawn to make room for high value crops such as fruit and nut perennials and vegetable annuals, all of which would be produced in rows rather than broadcasting. In addition, the review presented the potential impact of introducing both pumped drip irrigation systems as well as gravity fed drip irrigation systems, to be compared with improved surface irrigation techniques.

As a result of the review and analysis, pilot demonstrations are planned for all of these technology improvements in the course of the roll out of the near term demonstrations for each of the CLINS promoting crop production – wheat, perennials and annuals.

- **Activity 3 - Baseline Survey**

The contract with AHG was finalized during the quarter, and the initial House Hold and Small, Medium and Large agribusiness survey instruments were designed and submitted to USAID. Comments and changes were incorporated and the instruments were approved by the end of March. Translation and development of software programs have been scheduled for early April, permitting data entry made by enumerators in the field to go into an automatic message system on cell phones that will make some instant analyses as well as place the information directly into the basic data platform ready for further compilation to be used for results calculations and derivations.

- **Activity 4 – Herat Province - Wheat CLIN**

This program has been developed in close cooperation with two flour milling companies, **Aria and Tahr-e-Naw**, both of which currently import Uzbek and Tajik high gluten wheat for their milling operations. Both mills have agreed to support a program of production and sale of higher gluten content wheat seed, working with selected RADP-W farmers, and offering a premium price for high gluten wheat. In addition, these mills plan to fortify the wheat to further increase the nutrient-protein content.

Locally improved UG99 and rust resistant seeds which have also increased gluten content were identified. It was agreed that we would work with CIMMYT and ICARDA to identify varieties and sources of seed and work with MAIL to develop them. Problems of coloration and the need for testing were noted.



- **Activity 5 – Herat Province HVC CLIN – Perennials**

In collaboration with **ABADE**, the RADP-W team identified activities for support to companies who have received raisin drying equipment but are lacking in operational and maintenance capacity. RADP-W agreed to develop Business Development Services training for these value chain companies, as a complement to the grants offered under ABADE.

The **Morvarid Food Industries** has received laboratory facilities from another donor but it is idle because they do not know how to operate the equipment. In continuing discussions, RADP-W has proposed to provide training as part of a comprehensive program to promote pistachio and dried fruit.

The HVC team worked with **ANDHO** (Afghan National Horticulture Development Organization) in establishing the Pistachio Promotion Group. The donor group from Italy has taken the lead in forming this association. The first meeting was held in March.

The RADP-W HVC perennials Team Leader met with Professor Omid from **Herat Agriculture Faculty** to coordinate with the Pistachio Promotion Group, and training in grafting, harvesting and post-harvest handling is scheduled for the next quarter.

RADP-W participated in the Governor's Pastoon Pool forest sapling planting event. Project staff identified sources of forest saplings (poplars, pines, and others at local nurseries in the region, and learned the techniques of planting two year old saplings in unirrigated forest lands for conservations practices.

The RADP-W HVC team reached an agreement with AAEP for pistachio, apricot and pomegranate training in a grafting program delivered by Dr. Louise Ferguson of University of California, Davis in June.

With assistance from RADP-S, RADP-W made arrangements to procure pistachio bud wood from **Helmandi's** pistachio nursery in Kandahar for grafting onto Herat root stock. The Helmandi Nursery brought 1,000 saplings of pistachio from California some years ago, expressly for this purpose and due to the fact that conditions in Herat are similar to those in Kandahar, these buds should adapt quite freely.

**Apricot Value Chain Assessment** – A complete value chain assessment has been conducted, enabling the RADP-W to identify where in the chain interventions can be made most effectively. Drying of apricots with sulphuring is one of the goals, along with cold storage and proper packaging for fresh marketing. Pilot marketing trials on drying and sulphuring will also be conducted.

**Grape/Raisin Value Chain Assessment** – The RADP-W Grape Specialists conducted a Grape/Raisin value chain assessment during the reporting period, meeting with several producers, traders and raisin processors. The assessment allowed the Grape Specialist to identify strategic points of entry in the value chain activities that will be initiated during the harvest season in early summer, such as coordinated marketing with exporters, assistance in raisin drying, and cold storage.

The key to improvements in the grape/raisin value chain are centered on the decision as to when to switch from fresh grapes to dried raisins and maintaining quality control in raisin production. Post-harvest handling of both grapes and raisins is critical.

**Activity 6 - Herat Province HVC CLIN - Annuals**

Vegetables have the potential for earning the most income, employing the highest labor, and providing the best nutrition per area of production.

The HVC team identified several companies which supply greenhouses in Herat, quoted their prices, and determined which vegetables they were producing. One of them, **Aryana Saffron Agriculture and Greenhouse Company**, has planted tomato, cucumber, capsicum, and others, and they also produce vegetable seeds. Another company, **Geyah Agriculture**, is an input supplier of greenhouse equipment, including drip irrigation, fertilizers and pesticides. The team also met with a greenhouse operator to gain advice on greenhouse management, and the use of drip irrigation, trellising, timing, harvesting and opportunities for selling greenhouse-grown produce.

In a meeting with **Farzad Ershad Importing-Exporting Company**, the manager explained that it was costly to import from Iran and Pakistan, and if local supply were available in the off-season, it would benefit everyone.

The HVC team talked with **Ashyan Sazan Sabaz Company** about greenhouse equipment, drip irrigation, plastic covering strength, pesticides and fungicides and especially about vegetable seed varieties, and which are best for the Herat climate.

The Greenhouse Development Assessment has been drafted.

- **Activity 7 – Herat Province - Livestock CLIN**

The Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA) is responsible for the management of the Small Ruminant CLIN in Herat Province. The contract between DCA and Chemonics was signed in March, and much of the effort has been staffing up, establishing offices, and conducting assessments of existing VFUs.

In March, DCA identified 16 existing VFUs (Veterinary Field Units) in the RADP-W districts. Of these, 10 of them are in Herat. DCA will continue to give these VFUs support, refresher training and other assistance. DCA has also begun to identify new locations for additional VFU's.

To gather information for Cashmere Value Chain report, the Deputy Livestock Team Leader met with **Habib Omid Company**, one of the cashmere exporters and wool spinners. The company is also involved in dried fruit exports.

The Deputy Livestock Team Leader also met with the **Faizi Group Company**, a family owned veterinary services and agricultural company with 150 hectares of land and is engaged in poultry production. They are available as a 'service provider'.

- **Activity 8 - Enabling Environment CLIN**

The agribusiness specialist is on board and is able to provide some support to the enabling environment program, with supervision of the Technical DCOP. Recruitment of the enabling environment team leader continues.

The strategy for identifying constraining obstacles which hinder the effective realization of efficient and sustainable enterprise behavior and development, has been designed, and RADP-W staff have identified potential Working Commission members for the Enabling Environment Stakeholders Working Commission. Based on consultations with DAIL and agribusinesses, the following Enabling Environment policies have been identified as initial concerns to merit first hand attention:

- Accusations of produce and product 'dumping' by Iran in border areas with Afghanistan.

- Lack of market information for high value crops, and their volatility over the four production seasons in the local market, greater Afghan market and export markets.
  - Lack of quality standards for local produce, and ability to garner ISO or HACCP certification.
  - Lack of access to credit for ‘middle-range’ financing, such as orchards, small hoop houses, open-field vegetables, nurseries, seed centers, packing houses, cold store, etc. [RADP-W Grants may act as surrogate-equity to leverage this kind of financing] (Micro-finance and Bank financing is available)
  - Lack of cold chain capacity from farm-gate to assembly market to wholesale market, which denies market participants from realizing full product competitiveness.
  - Indications are that the Herat Exporters Union has negotiated tariff, fees and rules changes to ease the burden and costs of exporting produce and products through Iran to Middle Eastern markets. This will be analyzed and evaluated.
  - Market practices by traders who purchase on the vine or in the field will be evaluated to determine to what extent producer associations can establish ‘counter-vailing’ power to obtain higher, more reasonable farm-gate prices, reflecting the true value of their products and on-farm efforts.
  - Managing the Seed Policy and Proprietary Law and removing constraints on importing improved planting materials for vegetables and tree crops.
  - Design of a market information and price forecasting analytical unit is scheduled for being created in May.
- **Activity 9 - Badghis Province - Initial Coordination Meetings**

AREA signed their subcontract in March and immediately went about establishing offices and hiring the team in Badghis. Since they had already been working in the Province on previous assignments, they were able to move forward quickly.

Over a period of two weeks, the AREA team met with the Director of DAIL, the Head of Agriculture Affairs, the Head of the Provincial Sectorial Department, the Directorate of Women’s Affairs, the Deputy Provincial Governor, the Directorate of Economy, and several members of the Provincial Council. The reception in all cases was positive, supportive, and appreciative, but the issue of the lack of an MOU was brought up by the Directorate of Economy, who indicated this would be necessary for work at the district level.
  - **Activity 10 – Badghis Province - Wheat CLIN**

This wheat program in Badghis was developed with a similar model to Herat, and there has been communication and coordination between the Herat and Badghis teams as the large flour mills have been contacted. Herat has the lead in development of commercial relations and identification of sources of improved seed, taking into account the need for drought resistant varieties in Badghis.
  - **Activity 11 – Badghis Province - HVC CLIN – Perennials**

The RADP-W/AREA team has initiated consultations about the need to establish pistachio nurseries. Badghis is home to a large share of the National Pistachio Forest. The trees are individually planted in the hills scattered around the Province and ostensibly under control of a national forest protection guards. The incursion of Kuchi nomads and warlords has led to significant deterioration of the production, including significant cutting down of trees for fuel.

AREA team has developed an initial assessment of the pistachio industry and has laid the framework of a pistachio renovation program to vitalize pistachio production in Badghis. A Pistachio Production Association has been formed, and RADP-W/AREA has identified the need for nurseries with wild type pistachio seed for rootstock, farmyard manure, plastic bags, and tools such as water sprayers, budding and grafting kits, and pruning cutters.

AREA has also identified over 15 different varieties of grapes grown in the area, several of which are well suited for raisins. Generally, grapes are sold fresh early in the season, and left to dry as raisins later in the season. Two traditional methods of grape drying are used – the seedless kishmishi are left on the ground to dry in the sun, or they are hung in a kishmishi-khana mud room with ventilation slats. The RADP-W/AREA program has identified the need for a model kishmishi-khana shed for green kishmishi grape drying in each district to train farmers in proper techniques for drying. Apricots have similar needs.

- **Activity 12 - Badghis Province - Livestock CLIN**

The Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA) is responsible for the management of the Small Ruminant CLIN in Badghis Province. The contract between DCA and RADP-W Chemonics was signed in March. In March, DCA identified 16 existing VFUs (Veterinary Field Units) in the RADP-W districts. Of these, 6 of them are in Badghis spread throughout 4 Districts. DCA will continue to give these VFUs support, refresher training and other assistance. DCA has also begun to identify new locations for additional VFU's.

- **Activity 13 - Badghis Province - Enabling Environment CLIN**

AREA has not formally worked in development of their enabling environment program, but in the course of consultations with government officials, they have identified potential areas of concern, including: importing fruit/nut tree saplings and planting materials, establishing counter-vailing power for fruit and vegetables producers, to reduce the negative influence of the common practice for traders to purchase 'on the vine' or 'in the field', and women's access to financing for horticulture.

- **Activity 14 – Farah Province – Start-up**

The contract between Chemonics and CHA was signed in mid-March. Since then a provincial office was established in Farah City. Offices for the districts have not been rented so far.

Meetings with DAIL and the Provincial Governor have been made, and acceptance of the activities of RADP-W have been warmly received. RADP-W was invited to support a Development Review workshop/conference in late April.

Some of the CDCs have been contacted and they have been informed as to goals and targets and where demonstration farms will be located. DOWA and the Directorate of Economy have also been informed as to the objectives and roll out of RADP-W.

### **3.3 Planned for Next Reporting Period**

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, the focus will be on rapid implementation of sub-projects that are the building blocks of RADP-W. These are the first steps in organizing and implementing field work, and preparing the team, the villages, and the farmers for training in and adoption of new technologies is critically important for the expansion that will follow in the next three years.

- **Activity 1 Gender - Expansion of Women's Demonstration Plots**

Selection of 5 villages in 5 districts (3 provinces), 1 lead farmer per village, for replication of the successful model from Enjil District. Development of 5 2,000 square meter demonstration plots. This activity will be implemented in coordination with the HVC – Vegetable component, but with a strong orientation toward women's organizations at the village level. Training in irrigation and manure use. Consistent with the work plan. Contributes directly to Outcome 3: Increased Women's Participation in Agriculture Value Chain Activities and Outcome 1: Increased Agricultural Sector Productivity and Profitability in Target Regions.

- **Activity 2 Wheat – Training and Demonstrations in Post-Harvest Handling**

Selection of 10 villages in 5 districts, with approximately 40 farmers per village. Selection of lead farmers and organization of farmers into training/extension groups. Selection of master trainers. Curriculum development. Training and demonstration in mechanized harvesting with a manual, motorized reaper. Training in threshing, sorting, cleaning of wheat and wheat seed. Demonstration of small cleaning machine. Introduction to PICS bags. Begin identification and selection of villages for participation in large scale training and demonstration of a complete wheat production cycle starting in August. Consistent with work plan. Contributes directly to Outcome 1: Increased Agricultural Productivity and Profitability in Target Regions and Indicator 8: Decrease in post-harvest food losses in activity sites.

- **Activity 3 HVC, Vegetables – Commercial Demonstration Plots (pre-Greenhouse)**

Selection of 5 villages in 5 districts, with 1 lead farmer per village and neighboring farmers. Same model as the women's demonstration plots, except that the villages selected for this activity will be selected based on interest, conditions, and ability to initiate the greenhouse activities starting in August. This activity will work with both men and women. Selection of trainers. Curriculum development. Training in trellises, seedling production, and water management. This is consistent with the work plan. Contributes to Outcome 1: Increased Agriculture Sector Productivity and Profitability in Target Regions, and Outcome 4: Increased and Sustainable Adoption of Licit Crops. Contributes to Indicator 10: Number of farmers growing high value crops as a result of USG assistance.

- **Activity 4 HVC, Orchard Crops – Training/Capacity Building Modules**

Selection of villages and lead farmers and traders to be trained (30 to 40 per training session), procurement of training tool kit, preparation of training materials. Training conducted by RADP-W staff. Development of curriculum. Conduct training and capacity building in: grafting and budding of pistachio, apricot drying, post-harvest

handling of fruit crops, integrated pest management, and cold storage. Demonstration of cold storage (plant or mobile). Consistent with work plan. Contributes to Outcome 1: Increased Agricultural Sector Productivity and Profitability in Target Regions and Outcome 4: Increased and Sustainable Adoption of Licit Crops. Contributes to Indicator 12: Number of Individuals who have received US-government supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training.

- **Activity 5 HVC Orchard Crops – Demonstration of Solar Tunnel Driers**

Demonstration of solar tunnel driers for apricots for 2 producer groups and 1 lead apricot drying company. Selection of villages and farmers. Development of curriculum. Consistent with work plan. Contributes to Outcome 1: Increased Agricultural Sector Productivity and Profitability in Target Regions and Outcome 2: Commercial Viability of Agribusinesses Increased.

- **Activity 6 HVC Grapes – Training/Capacity Building Modules**

Selection of villages and lead farmers and traders to be trained, procurement of training tool kit, preparation of training materials. Training conducted by RADP-W staff and contracted specialists. Development of curriculum. Conduct training and capacity building in: irrigation and fertilization, green pruning, cluster formation, integrated pest management, and harvesting. Consistent with work plan. Contributes to Outcome 1: Increased Agricultural Sector Productivity and Profitability in Target Regions and Outcome 4: Increased and Sustainable Adoption of Licit Crops. Contributes to Indicator 12: Number of Individuals who have received US-government supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training.

- **Activity 7 Livestock – Training for VFU's**

Two week refresher training courses for existing paravets in VFU's that have been selected for additional assistance. Identification of locations for new VFU's and candidates for paravet training. Consistent with work plan. Contributes to Outcome 2: Commercial Viability of Agribusinesses Increased and Indicator 16: Number of private and public sector veterinary service providers that applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance.

- **Activity 8 Livestock/Agribusiness – Draft Agreement with one or more Cashmere Companies**

Release APS for grants with NGO's, producer groups, and agri-businesses. Identification of cashmere processing companies, cashmere value chain assessment, discussions and negotiations with cashmere companies under the umbrella of the RADP-W APS. The agreements will include training and buying agreements for farmers as well as assistance to the cashmere companies in technology and markets. Consistent with work plan. When signed and implemented these agreements will contribute to Outcome 1: Increased Agricultural Sector Productivity and Profitability in Target Regions and Outcome 2: Commercial Viability of Agribusinesses Increased.

- **Activity 9 Enabling Environment – Formation of Enabling Environment Working Group**

Identification of lead firms, organizations, and agencies with interest in policy and enabling environment issues. Coordination with DAIL. Initial group meetings and selection of participants among those volunteering. Initial organizational meetings. Consistent with work plan. Will contribute to Outcome 5: Improved Enabling Environment for Farmers and Agribusiness.

### **3.4 Lessons learned**

There have been no formal evaluations, audits, or assessments of the RADP-W program during this quarter.

## **4. Collaboration with GIRoA, other donor projects, or other USAID projects**

### **4.1 Links with relevant GIRoA ministries**

RADP-W management and USAID representatives met the Herat DAIL Director at the USAID Mission and received permission to start meeting at the District level prior to receiving the MOU and official Work Plan. As a result of the meeting, the RADP-W Value Chain advisor and the HVC Team Leader met with the Extension and Research Departments of DAIL. The DAIL representatives expressed their opinions with regard to their needs and constraints. Since the AAEP project was responsible for most of these activities, RADP-W discussed with them which components of this plan could be supported once operations are initiated. RADP-W also learned that DAIL has Land Leveling equipment, which could be used in the wheat and horticulture programs of RADP-W in the near future.

The RADP-W Gender Team met with the **DAIL Women Empowerment group** and will provide support for the Regional Policy Networking Committee.

### **4.2 Links with other donor agencies**

No new activities during this quarter.

### **4.3 Links with other USAID projects**

RADP-W worked closely with **AAEP** during the reporting period, and attended two trainings, one for how to use PICS grain storage bags, and the other on Nutrition Training. An agreement was reached for AAEP to bring out a specialist in fruit and nut tree production for a three day training session in grafting in early June.

The **Financial Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan (FAIDA)** project facilitated the 3<sup>rd</sup> Afghanistan-India Innovation Partnership Fair in Herat. With collaboration from ACCI, AISA and local government authorities, 24 Indian firms were invited to exchange ideas and show their innovations to Afghan firms. Indian-Afghan trade is \$683 million but declining, and this initiative is design to revitalize it. Companies with interest in Afghan-Indian trade were present, such as the Afghan Rural Finance Company, FINCA, Afghanistan International Bank (AIB), and Mutahid (micro-finance institute). These institutions will be providing credit and loans, and some Islamic compliant financing, to complement the grants that RADP-W will be implementing with key value chain players. All aspects of the value chains will be addressed by these funding sources – product standards (laboratory evaluations and ISO certifications), equipment procurement and leasing, harvesting technologies, cold storage and packaging, handling and branding.

RADP-W participated in SMS marketing information workshop sponsored by **IDEA-NEW/USAID** in Kabul, in order to determine how the Malomat Roshan market information system could be made available in Herat.

A representative from RADP-W participated in **USAID RP-West Gender Coordination and Discussion Event for Women's Empowerment** on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2015. Participants were from MAIL line departments (Women's Affairs, Education, Economic Development, Agriculture, Provincial Councils, Provincial Governance Gender Unit, and Human Rights

office) and from USAID Implementing Partners (ABADE, NDI, SIKA, ADF, and RADP-W). It was agreed to convene quarterly coordination meetings, chaired by DOWA.

## **5. Management and Administrative Issues**

### **5.1 Personnel**

20 Chemonics staff were brought on board during this quarter, bringing the total to 37.

### **5.2 Adaption of the activity**

RADP-W is at the stage of beginning intensive implementation of field activities that require new types and levels of coordination between the operations and technical teams and communication, coordination, and management of the KIPs. These are planned and prepared for, and there is no apparent need to adapt the activity to new circumstances.

### **5.3 Modifications and Amendments**

No modifications or amendments.



## 6. Success Stories and Photos

# SUCCESS STORY

## Growing to Help Others Grow

Mrs. Halima is an Afghan woman with 6 children who has never had the opportunity to learn to read and write. She was married when she was 18, and, soon after, her husband fell ill with tuberculosis. During this time she survived on bread and water and suffered considerable hardships. But she was determined to survive and took jobs as a construction worker, and later she tried her hand at raising sheep and milking cows that she rented from other farmers. But when she received training in horticulture she found her vocation, and her life slowly began to



change. She earned a good income with her vegetables - tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, okra, cucumbers, squash, and more, and she combined her green thumb with an innate sense of business, and her vegetable farm eventually grew to over a hectare of land.

As Mrs. Halima's fortunes changed, and as her farm grew, she decided that she had to share her good fortune with other women. She wanted to grow, and she wanted to help others grow with her.

Mrs. Halima formed Sare Poul Gizan, a women's association with 25 members from her village of Ghazun Sanger, and she became known as an effective leader in the Directorate of Agriculture. That is how she found out about USAID's new

Regional Agricultural Development Project for Western Afghanistan (RADP-West), and that is how RADP-West found her. When Mrs. Halima learned that her association had been selected to work with RADP-West, she didn't waste any time – she went from house to house and enlisted 220 women, and she proposed to the RADP-West gender team that she would provide a jerib (2,000 sq. meters) of land to be used as a demonstration farm and for hands-on training of 20 women in best practices for vegetable production. These 20 would work together on the land, and they would share in the harvest, and each of the 20 would sign an agreement to train another 10 women, who would have an opportunity to have the same hands-on training during the next planting cycle. Mrs. Halima proposed that the project would grow each year, produce more, and train more women.

Mrs. Halima's proposal became the first activity implemented by RADP-West in Afghanistan. USAID assistance has included improved seed, tools, and training for all 220 women, including seed for a plot at their own farms. In all, the 220 women are producing on 23 jiribs, over 4 hectares. They have learned about land preparation, raised beds, seedbeds for seedling production, irrigation, and planting. As the year goes on they will learn about new technologies such as plastic mulch, animal manure, IPM, and trellising, and when the crop is harvested they will learn to pack, transport, and sell their produce together. With assistance from USAID, Mrs. Halima has fulfilled her dream to help others, to grow herself, and to help other women grow. She is planning a vegetable packing shed for women, and now she has a partner. She can count

on USAID and RADP-West's continued support to create sustainable economic opportunity for her and for the women of Ghuzan Sanger.

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Photos of the demonstration plot and Mrs. Halima are found below.



## 7. Annexes

None currently.